1: Kelly E-5 (1930) 1934 Northern Paiute
Surprise Valley

ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE SURPRISE VALLEY PAIUTE

BY

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The following report is based upon field work among the Northern Paiute or Paviotso of northeastern California during the summer of 1930. The investigation was financed jointly by the University of California and the Bureau of American Ethnology.

The names Paviotso, Paiute,[1] and Northern Paiute are used interchangeably in this report, and unless otherwise indicated, all statements apply specifically to one band of such Paiute known as the Gidü'tikad[2], or Groundhog-eaters. Some forty members of that band are now living at Fort Bidwell, Surprise valley, Modoc county, headquarters for the season's field work. As the result of a five-day visit[3] to the Klamath Indian reservation, some scanty material was obtained from members of a related band, formerly of Silver and Summer lakes, Oregon, but now living on that reservation near Beatty.

It seems likely that the account of material culture here contained is as complete as can be made at the present time, for there is little of the old life left. A few roots are dug in spring, and berries are gathered in the fall, but seed gathering and the old hunting methods have fallen into disuse. A few baskets, mediocre at best, are to be seen; some rather nice skin dressing is done; most infants are carried in cradles; but aside from this, statements by informants are the sole reliance. Little was obtained on political institutions, probably owing to paucity of development rather than to fragmentary information. Such is not the case with religion, which is still more or less flourishing. At least shamanistic cures are in vogue, and a number of the older people frequent the sweat-lodge upon occasion, there to pray to the sun. The meagerness of the data must be attributed to the very

[1] Not to be confused with the Southern Paiute who are also known in the literature as Paiute.

[2] At private expense, borne by myself and by Miss Elsie Kober, of Fort Bidwell.

1: Kelly E-5 (1930) 1934 Northern Paiute
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105 marked reluctance with which informants discuss religious topics.
124 There is yet much to be obtained concerning beliefs and practices, but it will be a difficult matter to overcome the native reserve.

114 Comparatively little has been published on the Northern Paiute. Curtis has some material on the Nevada Paviotso as has Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins. A twenty-page paper by de Angulo and Freeland, partly linguistic, concerns the Fort Bidwell Paiute but is avowedly incomplete. For comparative material I have drawn on Lowie's Northern Shoshone and Notes on Shoshonean Ethnography. It is scarcely necessary to mention the very obvious debt to Spier's Havasupai Ethnography; and I am further indebted to Dr. Spier for the use of his Klamath material, still in manuscript form.[3] Dr. Kroeber has very kindly allowed access to the unpublished Walapai data which embody the results of the 1929 summer field course of the Laboratory of Anthropology.

122 Acknowledgment should be made to the residents of Fort Bidwell, who were uniformly helpful and sympathetic, but especially to Mr. Henry Kober and to Mrs. Chester Lowell, who with great kindness allowed specimens from their private collections to be brought to Berkeley for photographing; to Mr. L. Shotwell, of the local Indian school, for material assistance in procuring informants; and to Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Schmitz, of Beatty, Oregon, for extraordinary kindness in providing housing and in obtaining informants. I am indebted to Professor W. A. Setchell, of the University of California, for the examination of native tobacco specimens; to Mr. Morris Halperin, University Farm, Davis, for classification of several grasses; and to Mr. John Thomas Howell, of the California Academy of Sciences, for all other plant identifications and for incidental botanical information. Thanks are also due Professor E. O. Essig, of the University of California, for identification of insects and for use of manuscript material; and Mr. R. H. Rogers, County Surveyor, of Lakeview, for data concerning the geography of southern Oregon.

115 A list of informants is given below. Initials following the names indicate the key by which statements will be identified with certain informants. This has been done when evidence is conflicting, or of particular importance, or derived from a single individual. Statements in which the interpreter plays more than his part are jointly attributed. The ages given below are no more than crude approximations.

[3] Since published in volume 30, this series.

3: Angulo & Freeland D-5 (1926) 1929
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501 They used the tule "balsa" on the lakes. There are of course no navigable streams in their country.

498 They used dogs for packing, but not with the travois method. I never heard of the Pit Rivers using dogs for packing.

Résumé.

105 171 These Northern Paiute of California exhibit even fewer characteristics of the culture of the Plains than seems to be the case with other Great Basin Shoshoneans, as indeed might be expected. In fact, except for certain traits wich are probably of recent introduction (say, after the arrival of horse culture), and which the Pit Rivers also possess though less intensively, it would be hard to differentiate them from what may have been the *primary* type of culture of the California-Great Basin province, One might therefore class them as Californians. On the other hand, they lack those characteristics of a *secondary* and more recent layer of culture which have their focus in north-central California (solid houses, ceremonial complex, exceptionally fine basketry raised to the level of an art, etc.)[1].

It would seem then that here we are at the dead point between the reach of influences from those two centers: Plains, and Central California. Or rather we may say that the "secondary" culture of California which has but very feebly penetrated the Pit Rivers, has died at the western base of the Warner Range and left the Paiutes untouched, while many Plains characteristics have infiltrated the Pit Rivers.

LANGUAGE.

General Impression.

191 193 This dialect of Shoshonean (probably to be classed with Bannok) gives the impression of being a rather simple and transparent language of the analytic type. At least this appears to be its present stage. There are however many signs which suggest that the bare and sparse morphology is to be looked upon as a result of a process of breaking down or wearing off of older and more complex forms.

Phonology.

194 (The symbols used are those recommended by the American Anthropological Association, [Smithsonian Publication 2415]).

1. See Kroeber's *Handbook of the Indians of California*, *passim*.

115 131 and raised at Lakeview, Ore., at the head of Goose Lake, testified that the Paiute he was descended from not only hunted on the western slopes of the Warners around Goose Lake, but also hunted even farther west, in Drew's Valley and around Dog Lake. In a little valley which John did 222 not know an English name for, some eight miles west of Lakeview, the 224 Paiute obtained camas and other tubers, wild plums, wild onions, 181 ground-hogs and deer. John had also heard of Paiutes utilizing the [223] Chewaucan River-Summer-Abert lakes country for waterfowl at Chewaucan in the marsh, deer around Summer Lake, and ducks and deer and field rabbits at Abert Lake. Of Silver Lake and its food resources he said, "I don't know much about it," indicating that it was outside the range of his people (Reno Transcript, pp. 173-182, 184-185).

49. For early references to Northern Paiute in Surprise and Warner 114 valleys see Elliott, Ogden Journals, vol. II, p. 220; Frémont, Report, p. 212; Delano, Across the Plains, p. 89; Reed and Gaines, Gold Rush, vol. I, pp. 310, 577-578 and fns., pp. 624-627 and fns.; Williamson, Report of Reconnaissance made in 1849, pp. 20-21; Abbot, Report, p. 27; Drew, Official Report, p. 10; NA. BIA. OS. Letters Received 1869. H-18 (Huntington's detailed account of his 1868 visit to eastern Oregon, with remarks on Capt. Warner's death at Warner Lake in 1849); Indian Affairs on the Pacific, p. 28; Protection Afforded, pp. 12-14 (a notable account of Hot Spring [Surprise] and Pi-ute [Warner] valleys and the Indians encountered there, in 1854, by Capt. Jesse Walker); Drew, ibid., pp. 9-15, 24 (also an excellent account, for 1864); Gatschet, Klamath Indians, pt., I, 28ff.; RSW 1867 [CDS #1327] p. 69 (Maj. Gen. George Crook's report on Surprise and Warner valleys). For accounts of the Surprise Valley Paiute from 1870-1877 when they were intermittently on the Klamath Reservation see fns. for 3, 2; for a recent account of them see Kelly, Surprise Valley Paiute.

50. The Army officer was Gen. Benjamin Alvord, commanding the 105 Department of the Columbia. In April, 1864, Alvord wrote to Col. R. F. 114 Maury, commanding at Fort Dalles, Ore., "Any feasible and practical 648 scheme of getting the Snakes under our control will command instant 423 attention...They are a roving, nomadic race...a tribe hard to tame, not accustomed to a fixed place of abode, have no homes and no country; cannot by treaty surrender any lands, for they claim none. Such is supposed to be their condition." Huntington, with a Snake treaty in the off- 114 ing, immediately controverted Alvord's statement, asserting that the 423 Snakes had a sense of owning land, and that they claimed "all the land 648 embraced in southeastern Oregon, together with parts of Idaho, Utah, and perhaps [sic] Nevada" (WR, pt. 2, pp. 810, 836-837). Statements made by numerous Northern Paiute witnesses in 1951 at the Reno hearings go far to substantiate Gen. Alvord's remarks (Reno Transcript, pp. 15, 30,

APPENDIX: SUPPLEMENTARY ETHNOGRAPHIC NOTES

MATERIAL CULTURE

THE material culture of the Harney Valley Paiute is similar to that of the Surprise Valley Paiute. In the following description emphasis has been placed on those artifacts which are different either in manufacture or use to those described by Isabel Kelly (University of California, Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, Volume 31, No. 3), pp. 67-210.

HOUSES

1. Tule Mat House. Most usual type of winter house in the memory of old informants.

Frame. Four willow, poplar or young pine poles about 15-20 feet long were lashed together with a deer-skin thong or sagebrush twine. The poles varied in the amount that they extended beyond the lashing but probably averaged about one foot. They were spread out in a circle about ten to twelve feet in diameter and sunk in the ground about four to six inches. The two main poles at the front were close together and formed the door. Additional poles, usually eight, were leaned between the main poles—two in each space, and sunk about two inches in the ground. Two horizontal willows were lashed around the outside of the poles (one informant claimed they were lashed on the inside), one about four feet from the ground and the other about eight feet. It usually took two willows to extend around the circumference. (One informant stated three rows of horizontal willows were used.) The men cut the poles and the women helped drag them to the camp site.

Covering. The frame was covered with tule mats. The mats were about five feet high and varied from four to six feet in length. Four or five sections went around the base. The mats were made by sewing the tule together with a rye grass or sagebrush bark thread and a willow, greasewood or thorn bush needle. A willow stick was attached at each end of the mat; a hole was made in the top of one willow and the thread was knotted, and then the mats were sewn across back and forth about every six inches, and the thread looped around the willows at each side. At the bottom, the tule was bent under and held in place by two rows of twining. (Some informants stated there were also two rows of twining at the top.) The mats were attached at each end to one of the poles and tied to the horizontal willows about a foot from the top in order to make an overlap of three to eight inches. The sections of mats were connected by tying the end willows together. The top mat was not lashed to the frame but to two additional poles, consequently it was adjustable and the smoke hole could be completely closed. One informant stated that this was a relatively recent innovation and that in the old days the smoke hole was not adjustable. Extra layers of mats were sometimes added in cold weather. The

[p. 92 is blank]

11: Park E-5 (1933-1935) 1938
NR13 Northern Paiute NR13

Oregon were known to the Nevada Paviotso only through their Surprise Valley friends. To the east, the Paviotso had contacts solely with their immediate neighbors, the Western Shoshoni. Their relations with these people, however, were never so intimate and friendly as with the Northern Paiute of California. The Paviotso claim that the Bannock once were associated with them, but that these people moved east in search of the buffalo. It is doubtful whether the Paviotso and Bannock were in communication with each other in the period immediately preceding white occupation. The Southern Paiute, the Ute groups, and other Shoshonean peoples of the Basin were not known to the Paviotso.

The Paviotso have a culture which is usually regarded as Great Basin, but our present knowledge of this region is far too scanty to enable us to state just how typical of Basin culture are Paviotso customs. In their economic life, the wild products afforded by the habitat are utilized. Hunting, fishing, and gathering wild seeds and roots provide the food supply. Houses are simple but well-constructed, mat-covered and dome-shaped. Before the recent introduction of the Plains type of garments, clothing was negligible—a breechclout for men, a single apron in front or a double one front and back for the women, supplemented in the case of both sexes by woven skin robes and moccasins.

The social, political, and religious phases of Paviotso culture are likewise simple. The family is the basic unit in the social, as well as the economic, life. The five Paviotso bands are loose, localized, named groups with head-men or chiefs who have only advisory functions. Ceremonial performances are meager and mostly confined to shamanistic curing.

A great deal of the Paviotso culture has disappeared under reservation conditions. This is particularly true of economic life and material culture. Nevertheless, many social customs and religious beliefs and practices persist. Shamans are still common, and curing performances are frequent. Consequently, it has been possible to obtain accounts of a living religion from both shamans and laymen.

A brief statement on the sources of the material presented here may give some notion both of the value of these data as a basis for an accurate picture of the Paviotso complex and of their use-

among the Paiute. At the same time there has been an acceptance of white culture in terms of agriculture and livestock-keeping which has placed the Paiute within the American economic system as an identifiable ethnic group. It is interesting, however, to note that the identification with Indians and as Indians, among the Paiute, has resulted in the retention of very little from aboriginal Paiute culture but instead has been marked by a gradual acceptance of more and more of Plains culture, including dances, chiefs and war bonnets (Steward, 1933, plates). This Plains influence may in part explain the tendency toward the development of political organization among the Paiute. The first war leaders, the Shoshoni, were men of prestige; thus, traits they introduced were accepted readily by the Paiute. A corollary of this was the acceptance of the idea that chiefs were men of prestige per se so that even the peace chiefs, i.e., leaders of the anti-war factions who were influential in postwar Paiute life, served as prestigeful culture-bearers. Among the Washo, however, the various "captains" utilized by the whites as points of communication with the Indians appear to have been largely without prestige or particular status among their own people. As these men often took on airs, came to believe their own importance and began to call themselves "chief" the Washo tended to look on them as buffoons or worse and tended to reject any attempt to introduce new ideas through such men.

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In contrast to Paiute Indian identification, there appears to be among the Washo a reluctance to admit to Indian practices and values. Although there is a relatively high degree of use of aboriginal foods the Washo tend to deny this and often refuse to admit they like or ever eat such foods. Bedrock mortars are often located under brush to escape white notice.

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Summary and Conclusions

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This paper has attempted to describe the pre-contact situation and post-contact developments in western Nevada. We have seen that at the time of the entry of white men into this area the indigenous population was composed of two major groups, the northern Paiute and the Washo. As we have seen, these two peoples had made generally similar ecological adjustments, depending on hunting and gathering for subsistence. Culturally the Washo appear to share a number of traits with California tribes and seem to be more oriented toward the west than were the Paiute. Socially the two groups were organized in roughly the same manner: independent families operating together in small, loosely structured bands under headmen who were largely without power. Authority roles, such as antelope shaman and rabbit boss, were short lived and functionally specific. Communal hunts provided a basis for the amalgamation of a number of bands for short periods. Large supplies

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105 of plant food such as the pinenut also provided a basis for the coming together of large numbers but without the creation of special leaders.

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105 The entry of white men was met in much the same manner by the two
177 groups: avoidance on one hand and an attempt to exploit on the other. In the
178 1850's the Paiute developed a new social structure, based on the horse, and
648 territorially oriented mounted war bands began attacking the white man. This hostile activity went on until 1870 when the Paiute were finally defeated and contained on reservations. After a short-lived nativistic revival the Paiute, on and off reservations, began to farm and raise livestock. Another nativistic revival occurred in 1890 and spread throughout the Plains tribes. Since that time the Paiute have continued to develop as farmers and ranchers, rather rapidly abandoning many Indian practices. On the other hand they have retained a strong indentification as Indians and tend to emphasize the more colorful aspects of being Indians through the retention of dances and ceremonies, many of them of Plains inspiration. The relation of the Paiute to the white man has been largely friendly since the cessation of hostilities and the Paiute is generally tolerated, and a few exceptional individuals respected by the whites in Nevada. There has been a steady increase in the degree of tribal political organization over the entire period of contact.

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105 The Washo appear to have attempted to continue the first response
177 pattern with only a shift in emphasis during the past quarter century. Avoid-
178 ance and exploitation have gradually given way to dependence, economic in-
648 volvement and segregation of the Washo. The aboriginal band-land relationship broke down, but attempts to maintain modified bands as squatters on individual ranches continued until the 1920's. Hunting and gathering continued and still goes on. However, tribal organization, however slight it may have been, seems to have been lost. The failure of the Washo to unite against the white man seems to have resulted in the latter's failure to take notice of the Washo as a group. Since the reservation system was never instituted for the Washo, they remained squatters until the early 1900's and then were assigned scattered allotment lands. The attempt to adjust individually to the new situation appears to have led to a general fragmentation of Washo society. Certain ceremonies and shared cultural values identify Washo but a high degree of suspicion and disunity are characteristic of the group. Factions spring up
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[106] over every issue: how to deal with the white man, the creation of a tribal council or a Peyotist movement. There is a general tendency to attempt to hide or deny specifically Indian traits. In general the relation of the Washo to the white man is that of avoidance wherever possible, and of ill concealed hostility and suspicion on both sides of the fence.

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105 Materially both groups have accepted a great deal from the white man.
177 Wooden houses have replaced native shelters. Factory clothing is worn.
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9: d'Azevedo et al. E-4,5 (1952-1961) 1963 NT20 Washo NT20

Northern Paiute NR13 ●

The automobile is used by both groups. Only a few old women among the Washo still weave baskets. Gathering lore is still passed on among Washo women, although there is a tendency to hide this from whites. Only the bedrock mortar, basketry, pinyon picking tools and rabbitskin blankets seem to have survived as useful items in modern Washo life. The colorful paraphernalia of the Peyote Church is, of course, inspired by modern Peyotists and does not represent aboriginal Washo survivals. The Washo have turned to day-labor and odd-jobbing for economic support and have rejected agriculture or ranching, although there is a growing admiration for the cowboy. The Paiute have become to a large extent relatively successful farmers.[3]

N W 105 ● 177 178 W [186] [668] [464]

Washo change, then, can be characterized as an attempt to adapt aboriginal patterns to the new situations created by the entrance of the white man.

The Paiute, on the other hand, must be described as attempting to find new orientations of social and cultural behavior to meet the changing situation. We see three major shifts in Paiute activity over the past century.

The differences in response have been related to historic relationships with other Indian groups which have their basis in the distribution of the buffalo.

It has been suggested that the buffalo once extended much farther south and west than they did in the 1840's and that the Paiute shared a common ecological adaptation with other peoples in the northern part of the Basin. The withdrawal of the bison created two environmental zones but did not break off intertribal relations based on the former common subsistence patterns. Thus, when the Paiute were further impoverished by the introduction of white livestock into their gathering areas they responded by taking up the horse and a modified war complex, as revealed to them by visiting Shoshoni and Bannock, and entering into hostile actions against the whites. This led the whites to treat Paiutes as a unit, and, after their final defeat, to assign them to reservations. The reservation system not only emphasized Paiute unity and encouraged political development but also provided land for farming.

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The Washo, on the other hand, lived largely outside the area of buffalo range and therefore suffered no loss or ecological imbalance because the big animals became extinct in the region. Their response to the white man was simply to attempt to utilize what he brought into the new area and to modify the relatively successful Washo adaptation as little as possible. As a result, Washo organization, based on ecology, broke down as the ecology changed. The Washo lost even the minor tribal structure they had once had; bands changed and finally disappeared. The lack of unity prevented this group from

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3. This success must be viewed in relative terms. It is more accurate to say that the Paiute think in terms of stock raising and farming but most Washo do not.

W 105 177 182 obtaining lands on which to farm, and allotment lands, scattered and unsuitable for farming, were obtained only after the turn of the century as a result of a single short-lived period of semi-unity under a single head.

N W 105 177 648 What is suggested is that the Plains Indian relationships of the Paiute provided them with a model of behavior which influenced white men's attitudes and actions toward them in such a way that the opportunity for reorientation was presented. The Washo, without models of alternate behavior, made attempts at adjustment which were successful to some extent but caused the whites to ignore and despise them.

W 105 177 178 Thus the Washo remained scattered on allotments and continued squatting on public and private land totally unsuitable for agriculture and stock raising. Without a reservation, or at least relatively undisturbed occupancy of extensive lands, the Washo were unable to seek alternatives in stock-keeping or farming and were forced to attempt adjustments in terms of interacting with white society as an ethnic minority.

Notes

N W 114 1. The ideas in this paper were first expressed by the author at the Third Annual Meeting of the Kroeber Anthropological Society, May 16, 1959, Berkeley, California. In a more complete version it was later presented in the Seminar on Acculturation given by W. L. d'Azevedo in the spring of 1959 W [122] at the University of California, Berkeley. Subsequent to that time the author has conducted field research among the Washo, supported by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the Department of Anthropology, University of California. The present form of the paper has been developed since that time. I am particularly indebted to W. L. d'Azevedo for his encouragement of my Washo studies and for access to his extensive field notes and observations. The concepts developed here are, however, those of the author.

000 2. I am indebted to Professor R. F. Murphy for information conerning Basin Indian "hunting" of wagon train stock (see also Angel, 1958, 145-9).

3. This success must be viewed in relative terms. It is more accurate to say that the Paiute think in terms of stock raising and farming but most Washo do not.